

# PEARY-COOK FACTIONS WAGE BITTER WAR

**Worldwide Controversy Over Discovery of North Pole Will Probably Continue For Years--Await Cook's Book**

**The Commander Is a Man of Wealth--Owns Sixteen Islands on Maine Coast--Mrs. Peary's Record Trip**

By FREDERICK R. TOOMBS.  
SMALL wonder that the discovery of the north pole should have precipitated a war among the mapmakers of the earth. The sensational circumstances attending the revealing of the exploits of the Cook and the Peary expeditions made certain a long series of disputes, differences of opinion, rival claims and rival charges.

Each man's announcement that he reached the pole must in the light of subsequent events be accepted as true until proved false. One thing seems certain--that the arrival in the United States of both intrepid conquerors of the arctic drift will not bring a quick solution of the intricate points involved, nor will it end the controversy as it is spreading and flaming like a prairie fire. Their arrival on these shores will, on the contrary, fan the sparks still higher, and no man can foresee what the ultimate outcome will be. Peary is expected in New York in a few days, and Dr. Cook announces that he will arrive there about Sept. 21.

That the discussion as to who really discovered the pole will extend over a number of years appears certain. Dr. Cook states that the most convincing proof of his claims will not be given

until his new book appears, and as a result the publication of the work is awaited with keen interest on all sides.

**Peary's Claim That He Was First.**

Most of the acrimony given the discussion, particularly during the last few days, was caused by the publication of a statement by Reuter's News agency, which said that Commander Peary claimed that he was the first man to reach the pole. This report gave still another dramatic turn to the situation, and the many supporters of Dr. Cook expressed heated indignation at such action by Peary before he had had a chance to look into a detailed account of his rival's trip. Also as an indication of the fairness of Dr. Cook toward Peary the former's friends point to the message sent from Copenhagen in which the doctor said: "I am glad to hear of Peary's success. If he says he reached the pole I know he got there."

An unpleasant turn was given the situation, again, by the dispatch sent from Greenland stating that Dr. Cook had taken for his own use dogs raised especially for Peary and food held in reserve for him. Dr. Cook's reply to this charge is as follows:

"I understand that a rumor is current about my having taken some of Peary's food and dogs at Etah. This is founded on Eskimo gossip and misunderstanding. I desire no controversy. I simply say in reply to any such assertion, 'No.' Commander Peary is a friend of mine."

**Navy's Support of Peary.**

Commander Peary has more supporters in the United States as regards his claims than has Dr. Cook. His friends in the navy department have stood by every word he has sent thus far and are not endeavoring to convince the public of the responsibility

temperature during that march was 53 1/2 degrees below zero. The temperature the day we reached the ship was 65 degrees below zero."

Mrs. Peary, who has all along insisted that her husband would reach the pole, holds the record for the woman who has lived farthest north. She spent a year on the northern edge of Greenland with the commander when he made the first detailed explorations there.

The long winter night and the hardships inevitable under the circumstances produced no unfavorable effects upon Mrs. Peary, who battled through the dreary season of darkness with all the energy shown by the men of the party. To her doubtless the party owed much of the comparative comfort which relieved the monotony of the winter season. No white woman had been so far north by several hundreds of miles as Mrs. Peary at that time (1892). A Danish woman lived for a long time at Tessuik, about forty miles above Upernivik. This is hundreds of miles south of the place where Mrs. Peary spent a year. The Eskimo women were particularly interested in the white woman who had come among them, and Mrs. Peary was of much service to her husband in the pursuit of his ethnological researches.

## Laughs at Auto and Airship Plan.

The explorer has never had any sympathy with the various schemes advanced to invade the ice locked polar regions with airships or automobiles. When Dr. Cook proposed a few years ago to dash for the south pole in an auto Commander Peary scoffed at the idea. He said: "The roughness of the ice would prevent any such plan from working out successfully. Then, too, the stretches of open water could not be overcome."

He also deprecated the idea of going to the north pole in an airship in the following words:

"I don't feel like criticising those who try the airship method of navigation. I don't care for a balloon. Let me put it in this way: I don't believe that the airship in its present state of development can successfully combat the conditions which will be met with in an attempt to reach the pole. When an airship has been constructed which can navigate the air independent of storms and behave in the air as one of the big liners does at sea in any kind of weather, then it is time enough to talk about reaching the pole by means of an airship, but not before. My experiences have not impaired by belief in my own method, which is in making a dash over the ice by means of sleds."

## "My Most Important Work."

Commander Peary has long maintained that the discovery of the pole would not prove the most important result of arctic exploration. He states his views on the subject in the following words:

"The gain to the scientific world by the results of my work in the arctic regions is of far more actual value than the discovery of the north pole. The discovery of the north pole is merely a more or less spectacular fact, but still one that had to be tried again and again until actually accomplished. I have traveled the most northerly land on the globe. The departments of science which will be benefited by my sojourn in the north are geology, meteorology, anthropology and natural history. The full result of my labors, especially in the field of meteorology, cannot be fully ascertained until the observations I have taken have been worked out by scientists."

"Perhaps the most important result of my labor--I am not now speaking from a scientific standpoint--is the demonstrating most conclusively that the right kind of a man can carry on arctic exploration without great danger or suffering exceptional hardships. In fact, he can work in the far north as well as in his office in New York."

"In natural history the work I have done, I am vain enough to think, is great. No expeditions ever had the opportunity that we had of studying the musk ox. I have sent home at different times very complete specimens of this animal, and I have also sent a young walrus. So far as I know, no other specimens of these animals are now living in captivity, and scientists have unexcelled opportunity to study them when alive."

Commander Peary is widely reported to be a poor man, one who has been impoverished by his arctic trips. Such is not the case, however. Three years ago he purchased a total of sixteen islands along the Maine coast north of Portland, which are held at high prices owing to the demand for exclusive sites for cottages along the coast. Several of the islands are in Casco bay.

Eagle Island, which he owns, has for several years been Commander Peary's stronghold, his fortress, where he could retire at will safe from the attacks of interviewers and photographers. It is an outside island about fifteen miles from Portland, partly wooded, partly open, with vegetation almost tropical in its density.

The commander also owns Basket Island, in Casco bay, an ideal seashore resort. It is a small island, probably not more than a quarter of a mile long and perhaps an eighth of a mile wide. In fact, it is an ideal location for a big seashore hotel of the exclusive type, and this, it is said, is just the use to which Commander Peary will eventually put it. He has purchased an island off Freeport called "A Pound of Tea," and away down the middle bay, off Freeport, is Shelter Island, twenty miles from Portland and about the same size as Basket. This is one of the explorer's purchases.

Within a radius of five miles from Eagle Island are Great Mark, Upper Flag and Horse Islands. All these have been acquired by him within three years, and all are desirable.

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